

# GORBACHEV WARNS ESTONIA ON MOVES FOR INDEPENDENCE

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## AN INSISTENT PHONE CALL

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### Radio Quotes Kremlin Leader as Ordering a Retraction of Tallinn Resolution

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By **FRANCIS X. CLINES**

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**MOSCOW, April 4** — The President of the Estonian Soviet republic said today that President Mikhail S. Gorbachev personally warned him against Estonia's following Lithuania in declaring independence.

In a telephone call to President Arnold F. Ruutel from the Kremlin on Tuesday night, the Soviet leader expressed concern that the Baltic republics' rebellion be contained, Mr. Ruutel reported to the Estonian Parliament in Tallinn.

The Estonian leader said Mr. Gorbachev cautioned in the phone call that Moscow would take steps similar to those taken in Lithuania unless Estonia retracted its initial move toward an independence resolution, approved last Friday, in which the Soviet Union was accused of illegally occupying the republic for the last 50 years.

Mr. Ruutel, interviewed by Estonian Radio, quoted Mr. Gorbachev as saying: "When I heard of your resolution I was completely beside myself. You must declare the resolution null and void. It is an invalid one."

The Soviet military authorities and Communist loyalists in Lithuania have been waging a war of nerves for the last two weeks in Vilnius, the Lithuanian capital, making a show of troop movements and building occupations after Lithuania's declaration of independence on March 11.

The Estonian sovereignty resolution approved in Tallinn on Friday was not a full declaration of independence, but rather a notice to Moscow that the republic had started on a gradual course of reclaiming independent statehood lost in the forced Soviet annexation of 1940.

### **An Invitation to the Kremlin**

Mr. Ruutel said that when he told Mr. Gorbachev that the Estonian resolution was well founded, the Soviet leader asked him to come to the Kremlin to explain the situation in the republic.

President Gorbachev, who considers the Baltic independence moves unconstitutional, made the phone call to Estonia on a day when Aleksandr N. Yakovlev, a member of Mr. Gorbachev's Cabinet and one of his closest allies, met with representatives of the Lithuanian independence Government in talks aimed at defusing the crisis. No substantial progress was reported, although Soviet officials characterized the meeting as a "positive event."

Those informal talks were supposed to continue here today, but the Lithuanians reported that they were postponed.

The issue is also a major topic of talks in Washington between Foreign Minister Eduard A. Shevardnadze of

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the Soviet Union and Secretary of State James A. Baker 3d.

White House officials have stressed that a Soviet-American summit meeting scheduled for June could be endangered if the Kremlin used force in resolving the Lithuanian crisis. Mr. Gorbachev has renounced the use of force, but Lithuanian leaders have complained that the pressure tactics employed in Vilnius could easily escalate.

They talked today in Vilnius of a "good basis for optimism" because of Mr. Gorbachev's initial move toward informal talks. But the Lithuanian Parliament also approved another complaint about the situation, contending

that there was a possible threat of a coup d'état arranged by anti-independence campaigners in Vilnius acting with the tacit support of Moscow.

The Lithuanian Parliament spent much of the day attempting to draft a reply to Mr. Gorbachev's warning of last weekend that the republic's independence declaration would have to be retracted as the price for formal sovereignty negotiations, or else "grave consequences" could befall both sides.

#### **Possibility of Referendum**

A spokesman in the Lithuanian Information Office in Vilnius said that contrary to some speculation, the draft reply to Mr. Gorbachev thus far contained no mention of temporarily suspending the independence declaration.

But Lithuanian officials indicated that the possibility of putting their independence to a formal referendum, as Mr. Gorbachev has insisted, was still under consideration as a conciliatory offering to the Kremlin.

In Vilnius during the day, the Soviet authorities again organized an opposition protest demonstration against the Lithuanian Government of President Vytautas Landsbergis. Several thousand people, mostly members of the republic's pro-Moscow Russian and Polish minorities, took part in the rally adjacent to the Vilnius Parliament building, cheering as speakers praised Mr. Gorbachev for challenging the republic's independence move as illegal and destabilizing for the Soviet nation.